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CUBAN TRAINING OF FOREIGN NATIONALS

Although the following material is limited to the training of foreign nationals in Cuba, Soviet and Communist Chinese training follows the same general pattern. It is typical of the whole Communist system. Cuban training was chosen because of its specific connection with the situation in the Dominican Republic.

Fidel Castro has one goal which has remained unchanged since he assumed power in January 1959--his messianic endeavor to "export the revolution." To further this goal, the Cuban foreign intelligence service, the General Directorate of Intelligence (Direccion General de Inteligencia, DGI) has the responsibility of supporting selected foreign revolutionary movements and it employs guerrilla warfare and sabotage agents charged with directing and supporting revolutionary activities.

These agents are often known as Cuban agents to the local Communist and leftist groups with which they work. They are usually recruited by agreement between a DGI officer and the local Communist or leftist organization to which the person belongs. The group recommends to a DGI contact--an officer on a trip to the area, a local representative or agent, or a headquarters officer in Cuba if a group official is visiting

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there--any of its members as candidates for guerrilla training in Cuba. DGI officers, however, observe guerrilla warfare and sabotage agents during their training in Cuba and select those of special potential for recruitment as unilateral intelligence agents. The case officer in charge of a group of agents to be trained as guerrillas arranges for their instruction in the Department of Special Schools of the DGI. The case officer himself does not conduct the training, which is entirely a responsibility of the Department of Special Schools. The student group is assigned to one of the Department schools by nationality; training groups are as large as twenty-five or more and as small as three or four persons. Courses last three to six months, depending on the type of training and the ultimate missions of the trainees, but in special cases may last as long as a year.

The Cuban instructors are all military, drawn from the Cuban Army; there is one for each military speciality, and a political instructor. Many of the Cuban instructors are veterans of the guerrilla battle against the Batista forces. There are also several former officers of the Spanish Republican Army assisting the Cubans. These officers lived in the Soviet Union following the cessation of hostilities in Spain, hold rank in the armed forces of the USSR as well as the Cuban armed forces. In addition, the DGI has at least five Soviet advisors.

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Training--General

Training covers all aspects of guerrilla warfare, weapons handling, explosives, sabotage, demolition, military tactics, combat engineering, leadership, as well as means of countering anti-guerrilla activities. Weapons are of both American and Communist-Bloc provenance. Some specialized training is given; for example, there is a school for frogmen at the mouth of the Jaimanitas River in Barlovento, west of Habana. Not all guerrilla trainees receive this training, however.

Guerrilla students are required to meet a standard of complete familiarity with all the information and material forming part of their instruction. Examinations are given regularly; students who fail them are required to repeat the instruction. A student may have to repeat the entire course if he cannot pass the necessary examinations. An agent candidate who proves completely incapable of mastering the course is removed from the school, and an effort is made to find him a special job elsewhere. During the course, the instructors issue monthly reports to the school administration, both on the course as a whole and on the performance of each student.

While guerrilla training is in progress, two special preparations for the future are made. The first is the arrangement of the agent's travel to his target area; the second is the assessment of the trainee

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for other possibilities. Throughout the course he is observed and evaluated; if he shows more than usual aptitude and ability, he comes under consideration as a potential intelligence agent for the collection of information or penetration of his home government. If the trainee is assessed as suitable for intelligence agent work, he is removed from the guerrilla course and receives special instruction for more clandestine and more complicated tasks. A plausible explanation for his removal is concocted for his fellow students. Training for intelligence work is not revealed to the Communist Party or leftist groups sponsoring the agent, who becomes, in effect, a semi-overt Cuban agent in guerrilla activities and a clandestine agent in intelligence reporting or other functions.

When guerrilla agents have completed their training, the DGI case officer briefs the group on its mission in its home area, which is usually support of local revolutionary activities. The briefing includes assignment of tasks, explanation of what support the group may expect and how it is to be supplied, directions for reporting to the sponsoring group, advice on security and self-protection, and the travel route to be followed. In addition the group leader receives a special briefing on means of communication with the DGI headquarters, special arrangements for supplying the group or its sponsoring organization, and sometimes propaganda or sabotage materials for transportation to the home area.

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Typical Training Course

A typical four months' course would include the following training:

Approximately a month out in a province devoted to marching and familiarization with jungle living and terrain. The area must be fairly isolated and an effort is made to choose an area that most resembles the home country. In addition to the Cuban officer and political commissar in charge of each squad, a different trainee is designated each week to be in charge of the squad so that as many as possible would become familiar with handling people. During this phase of the training the trainees prepare their own meals, sleep in the open, post watches, march, and get instruction in ambushing and encamping.

The next month is spent in the Habana area studying arms training, explosives, communications, topography, firing and ballistics, and the direction of guerrilla wars. Arms training consists of handling, use, arming, disarming, and maintenance of U. S. and Communist-Bloc weapons such as rifles, submachine-guns, bazookas, mortars, and hand grenades. Instruction in the handling, use and manufacture of explosive devices and materials include anti-personnel bombs, anti-tank bombs, incendiary bombs,

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Molotov cocktails, homemade bombs, and fragmentation hand grenades. Instructions are also given in how to deactivate bombs and use the materials for manufacture of other bombs.

Communications training consists of handling of radio sets, use of radio codes, how to tap, lay and cut telephone lines, conventional signals using lights, smoke, candle, flags; and the codes used for enciphering their messages. The reading of charts and maps, mountain orientation, use of compass, azimuth, determination of height, map-making, and night movements make up the topography course. Firing and ballistics is given only several times a week during this phase of the training.

The trainees are also given instruction in the direction and organization of guerrilla war. This is an indoctrination course in the military, political, psychological, and economic aspects of guerrilla warfare, covering such topics as treatment of peasants, preparations for taking a town (spies, observers, surveillance points, obtaining information needed for takeover), armed and political warfare (distinction and relationship between the two, the use of each), seizure of a military installation, governing a town (indoctrination of

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populace, placement of officials, methods of attracting peasants), and the conduct of a guerrilla organization.

The trainees have manuals to read such as Guerrilla Warfare by Ernesto "Che" Guevara Serna and 150 Questions Asked of a Guerrilla Fighter by Alberto Bayo Giraud, a former officer in the Spanish Republican Army. One trainee's material included the following:

An 18-page discussion of guerrilla warfare which is divided into sections entitled "The War of the People," "Operational Bases of the Guerrilla," "The Political Struggle and the Armed Fight in the Strategy of the War of the People," and "Territorial Organization."

Handwritten notes of formulae and instructions for the manufacture of explosives.

A six-page personal description of the training entitled "Function of the Training Schools and Preparation of Revolutionary Guerrillas in Cuba, Including Phases of Study."

"Manual of Guerrilla Warfare Tactics," in two parts, totaling forty-nine pages. Topics included are organization of a guerrilla army, collection of

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intelligence, emergency plans and total plans of action, camp security for guerrilla groups, offensive operations, organization and direction of offensive combat, propaganda, surprise attack, sabotage, ambush, action in ambush, combined operations, limited siege, and guerrilla offensive operations under intensive enemy pressure.

There is also reading material relating theory to the struggles in Algeria, South Viet Nam, China, the USSR, and Cuba, which were in effect syntheses of all revolutionary movements. During the evening, there is reading and discussions of Marxist-Leninist theory.

The next phase of their course consists of field training using all the techniques that they have studied. This includes firing weapons on a practice range, practice in explosive devices, charting their own courses and making maps on marches, trenching, camouflage, and living off the land. Sanitation and first aid are also covered.

In the final phase of training, the guerrilla trainees receive practical experience when they join the LCB (Fight Against Bandits, one of the Cuban counter-insurgency organizations) in combing (peinando) operations in the Escambray against the counter-revolutionaries (alsados).

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If the length of the course must be shortened, the hardening process in the province is often left out. Training is abbreviated if the personnel cannot remain in Cuba for the longer period, or if the intellectual level is low. There are instances of illiterate trainees receiving beginning courses in reading in addition to simplified guerrilla training. In some cases, the military portion of the training is given first, and leadership training is contingent upon successful completion of the military phase. Longer courses including those lasting for a year consist of comprehensive practical training of the same kind as covered above; the remaining time is devoted to extensive ideological training.

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